Limited

(i)

My sense of smell is [limited]
but sterile customer service shrink wrap
has honed the smell of tobacco
the way it clings to clothes
and hair and smiles
wafts in and out with certain customers
And you ,

(ii)

little boy -
hands of red clay
backyard glass and slate
you ask us not to bear your burden
thinking the weight of you
did not already sit on my chest
and s l o w my breathing

(iii)

Little boy   this family is forged with you in it
Little boy   this life is too interesting to destroy so soon
Little boy   I am afraid and I love you
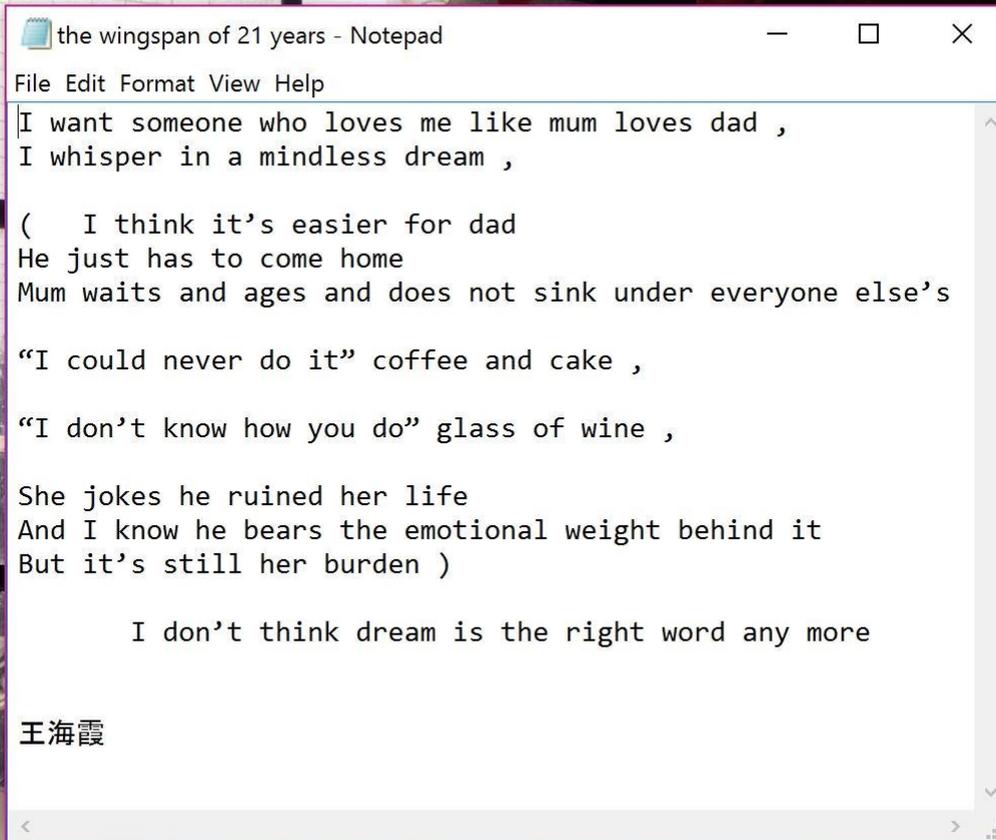   I don't tell you enough

(iv)

I weave it into worries
into another hallway carpet
another way to muffle footsteps
walk with tears balanced on fingernails
in the c^{u}r$_v$e^s of calcium bumps that form with stresses
I walk with you and my heart feels like glass instead of iron
I don't tell you enough that I love you
fear keeps it right where tonsils flare
and I'm afraid of leaving to let you grow up
afraid you'll blame me
Little boy I smell fear on you
I don't tell you enough that I love you
Little boy, please don't be afraid

(v)

[   ]

(vi)

I love you

I want someone who loves me like mum loves dad ,
I whisper in a mindless dream ,

(I think it's easier for dad
He just has to come home
Mum waits and ages and does not sink under everyone else's

"I could never do it" coffee and cake ,

"I don't know how you do" glass of wine ,

She jokes he ruined her life
And I know he bears the emotional weight behind it
But it's still her burden)

        I don't think dream is the right word any more

王海霞

The whole blurry way home

There is an emotional toll when you leave
I pay it with the small fish that live in the aquarium of my eyes
Quite often, my vision is distorted by water
We pay it in the salt of my mother's silence
And the ripping of velcro

Zips and
              clips and
                          straps

slung over shoulders

                                  "I just realised... you're almost as tall as me"

A laugh
My heart breaks every at the turn of the twelfth week
I spend the next ten
putting it back together

(just to break it again)